

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AGRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
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UNCLAS BRUSSELS 01401

DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE ELECTRONICALLY

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS:EAGR,BE
SUBJECT: BELGIAN GREEN FRONT VIEWS ON 1977-78 EC AGRICULTURAL PRICES

1. BEGIN SUMMERY.ON THE EVE OF THE EC COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL
MINISTERS' MEETING TO DECIDE 1977-78 AGRICULTURAL PROCESS,
THE BELGIAN GREEN FRONT EXPRESSED ITS SOLIDAIRY WITH THE COPA PROPO
PROPOSALS FOR A 7.4 PERCENT INCREASES.

END SUMMARY.

2.THE BELGIAN GREEN FRONT,WHICH INCLUDES THE THREE MAJOR
AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES REPRESENTING VIRTUALLY ALL BELGIAN
PRODUCERS,RECENTLY MET AND EXPRESSED ITS SOLIDARITY WITH THE
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COPA PROPOSALS FOR A 7.4 PERCENT INCREASE IN AGRICULTURAL
PRICES,AS WELL AS THE OTHER ITEMS INCLUDED IN
THE COPA PACKAGE.IN SUPPORTING ITS POSITION,THE FRONT
CLAIMED THAT A 7.4 PERCENT INCREASE CONSTITUTES A SACRIFICE BY
PRODUCERS,IF COMPARED TO INCREASES IN PRODUCTION COTS AND THE LEVEL
OF FARM INCOME VIS-A-VIS THAT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL SECTORS.THE
FRONT BELIEVES IT IS IMPORTANT TO SAFE-GUARD THE CAP,AND ITS

AGREEMENT TO ACCEPT ONLY A 7.4 PERCENT INCREASE IS A CONTRIBUTION BY BELGIAN PRODUCERS TOWARD ACHIEVING THIS OBJECTIVE. SINCE THE FRONT FEELS A 9.5 PERCENT INCREASE WOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN VIEW OF RISING COSTS AND INCOME DESPARITIES, THE CONSIDER A 7.4 PERCENT INCREASE AS AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM, AND ARE OPPOSED TO ANY REDUCTION OF THIS AMOUNT BY ANY INDIRECT MEANS, SUCH AS MONETARY CORRECTIONS. AS FAR AS THE IMPACT ON CONSUMERS IS CONCERNED, THE FRONT MAINTAINS THAT AN OVERALL INCREASE OF 7.4 PERCENT IN FARM PRICES WILL ONLY RESULT IN ABOUT A ONE PERCENT INCREASE IN CONSUMER FOOD PRICES.

3. THE FRONT ALSO RESTATED ITS POSITION ON A DAIRY REFORM PROGRAM, NAMELY THAT THE PROBLEM MUST BE DEALT WITH IN ITS ENTIRETY. INCLUDING MEASURES DEALING WITH FATES AND OILS.

4. THE FRONT CONCLUDED ITS PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY INDICATING THEIR INTENTION TO WORK CLOSELY WITH MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE LAVENS TO INSURE THAT ITS OBJECTIVES ARE MET.

5. COMMENTS. THUS FAR, BELGIAN REACTION TO THE RUMORED EC COMMISSION PROPOSAL FOR A 3 TO 4 PERCENT INCREASE HAS BEEN STRONGLY NEGATIVE. THERE ALSO HAS BEEN SPECULATION THAT THE FINAL INCREASE IN 1977-78 PRICES WILL NOT BE DETERMINED UNTIL A MARATHON SESSION IS CONCLUDED, PROBABLY AT THE END OF MARCH.

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